

REMARKS

Entry of the foregoing and reconsideration of the application identified in caption, as amended, pursuant to and consistent with 37 C.F.R. §1.116 and in light of the remarks which follow, are respectfully requested.

At the outset, Applicants thank Examiner White of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office for his time and consideration in participating in a telephonic interview with Applicants' representative on August 5, 2004. The Interview Summary accurately reflects the substance of the interview. At the conclusion of the interview, the Examiner agreed that amending claim 1 to incorporate the features of claims 20 and 21 therein, and canceling claims 13-16, would result in the withdrawal of the outstanding prior art rejections. The Examiner also indicated that it appeared that such amendments would place the application in condition for allowance (See Interview Summary).

By the above amendments, claims 13-16 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claim 1 has been amended for clarification purposes to incorporate the features of claims 20 and 21 therein. Entry of the foregoing amendments is proper at least because they place the application either in condition for allowance or in better form for appeal. See M.P.E.P. §714.12.

In the Official Action, claims 13-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,550,189 (*Qin et al*). Without addressing the propriety of this rejection, it is noted that such rejection is moot in view of the cancellation of claims 13-16. As such, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-12 and 19-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over *Qin et al* in view of European Patent Document No. 0 410 323. Without addressing the propriety of this rejection, Applicants note that as discussed above, the Examiner has

indicated that the amendment of claim 1 to incorporate the features of claims 20 and 21 therein would be effective to overcome this rejection. In light of the fact that such amendment has been made by this paper, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

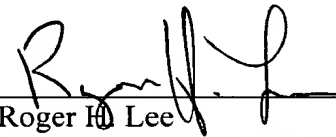
From the foregoing, further and favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance is believed to be next in order, and such action is earnestly solicited. If there are any questions concerning this paper or the application in general, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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